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3 Sets of Senate Hearings Expected On Soviet Might and Strategic Aims

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Jan. 7—The Senate will hold at least three sets of hearings on Soviet military ability and strategic objectives this winter, Congressional aides said today.

The hearings are in part "regular, scheduled business," according to staff aides engaged in preparing for them, and in part motivated by interest in a debate among American intelligence specialists about Soviet strategic intentions.

Late last month, George Bush, Director of Central Intelligence, and other leading intelligence officials said that the American intelligence community was taking a "more somber" view of Soviet military capacities and aims. It was also reported that the latest intelligence community "national estimate" of long-range Soviet goals concluded that the Soviet Union sought strategic superiority over the United States within the next decade.

Intelligence officials said the controversial estimate, approved Dec. 21 by the National Foreign Intelligence Board, which is made up of the heads of all intelligence and security agencies, was signed by Mr. Bush this morning. A summary was given to President-elect Carter's designated National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, last week.

Study of U.S. Intelligence

The House is also expected to take up questions about Soviet strategic capacity—but later. Members of the House International Relations Committee said their first order of business was reconstitution of their subcommittees by Feb. 1.

The Senate hearings include a continuing closed-session study of American intelligence collection, production and quality by the Select Committee on Intelligence. This study is being conducted

under the authority of a subcommittee on intelligence quality control headed by Senator Adlai E. Stevenson, Democrat of Illinois.

A spokesman said the subcommittee has been "fully apprised" of a dispute on Soviet aims and abilities between an "A-team" of intelligence community officials and a "B-team" of outside specialists brought into "competitive analysis" by Mr. Bush late last year.

In addition, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will begin hearings next Friday on the effectiveness of American strategic-weapons systems in relation to Soviet abilities.

Extension Expected

The call for these hearings was made last May by Senator Charles H. Percy, the Illinois Republican, who proposed that they serve as a vehicle for examining the efficacy of new Federal expenditures on intercontinental ballistic missiles, the disputed B-1 bomber and the Trident nuclear submarine program.

A committee aide said, however, that in view of the latest intelligence estimate of Soviet strategy, the hearings would undoubtedly be extended to take up questions concerning "the Soviet threat and a briefing on strategic balance" in closed sessions.

The Foreign Relations Committee's second hearing, Jan. 19, is scheduled to hear testimony from Paul H. Nitze, former deputy secretary of defense, who was on the "B-team" of outside estimators leading the movement toward a grimmer intelligence appraisal of Soviet strategy last autumn.

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